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Mr. Henry R. Lang, of the Charleston High School, followed with a paper on

12. "The Collective Singular in Spanish."

The purpose of this paper is to call attention to the use in the Romance languages, and more particularly in Spanish, of the singular for the plural in a collective sense, a usage which has thus far been entirely overlooked in *Diez Comparative Romance Grammar* and in the special grammars of the Neo-Latin idioms.

The tendency to conceive a number of objects, particularly inanimate things, as a unit, is general in Indo-European speech. We discover it in the familiar fact that neuters either use no plural sign or take the ending of an abstract noun in the feminine singular, as in the Germanic languages, the Greek and the Latin, and that Greek neuters plural have a singular predicate. To the working of the same tendency may be attributed the formation of feminine singulars in the Romance languages from Latin neuters plural.

Representing a multitude of things, animate or inanimate, as a unity lends life and individuality to language; hence it is done especially in poetry and in such words as adopt a poetical manner of treatment. We may look for it in the proverb, in the proverbial phrase and similar modes of expression. From poetical language it passes over into prose, where, however, its use is limited, and restricted to concrete nouns of frequent occurrence.

In Latin the collective singular was probably more generally used than would appear from the grammars. It occurs both in poetry and prose with concrete nouns. The singular substantive is often accompanied by *multus* or its superlative *plurimus*. Livy and the later writers coördinate singular and plural.

Among the Romance languages, the Spanish seems to have preserved this trait of Latin grammar most faithfully and extensively. It uses the collective singular with the following nouns:

1. *Concrete nouns.*

a. Names of persons: Varon, fembra, caballero, hidalgo, mujer, dueña, vecina, hombre, barba, peon, menestral, criado and the like.

b. Names of nations: cristiano, cristiana; moro, mora; turco, araucano, etc.

c. Names of animals: caballo, perro, oveja, gallina, anguila, trucha and others.

d. Names of parts of the body: cuerno, uña, diente, cabeza, mollera, cabello, brazo, mano, ala, ajo. With names of parts of the body which are in pairs the singular may serve the especial purpose of expressing the faculty or sense which these parts represent, whereas the plural refers to the external parts.

e. Names of weapons and other objects pertaining to military life : arma, espada, fierro, lanza, arcabuz, adarga, quadriello, flecha, dardo, honda, palo, pica, piedra, galga, cañon; pendon, bandera; silla, espuela, campana and the like.

f. Names of wearing apparel: aljuba, albornoz, capa, camisa, garnacho, lazo, marlota, pena, pluma, aljofar, etc.

g. Names of fruits: grano, uva, higo, pasa.

h. Names of plants: romero, rosa and others.

i. Names of materials: piedra.

j. Names of objects of nature: monte, fuente, rio.

k. Names of places and buildings: pueblo, ciudad, otero, yerno; castiello.

2. Abstract nouns, especially nomina actionis: golpada, porrada, cuchillada, majadura, lanzada, ferida; historia, ventura, and others.

With the majority of such collective singulars one of the three adjectives of quantity mucho, tanto, cuanto is used.

In the older language tanto and cuanto are sometimes followed by a partitive genitive and by attraction agree in gender with the noun. Thus: Cuanta de la yegua baya, for cuanto de la yegua baya.

The collective singular is often coördinated with the more usual plural: muchos bonos uasallos, mucho bon acostado, muchos bonos amigos, mucho bon criado.

The collective singular is found oftenest in the early epic poetry of Spain where it serves to lend brevity and life to the narrative. Its use in prose is limited. The other Romance tongues use this construction less extensively than Spanish. It seems to be rare in Portuguese. We have found it here and there in Dante's Divina Commedia with various concrete nouns, such as mano, piè, ala, occhio, incarco, rima. In French it is used with names of persons: homme, ami, soldat; names of nations: le Belge, l'Anglais, le Sarmate, le Russe; of animals: poisson, truite, saumon; of fruits: gland, faine; of arms: canon. A careful study of the construction in these and the other Neo-Latin idioms would, in my opinion, result in a valuable contribution to Romance grammar.

Dr. H. A. Todd made some remarks on the results presented in this communication, the appropriateness of the theme for treatment before the Association, which wishes to encourage original research in all departments of the modern languages, and closed by suggesting for Mr. Lang's list a few additions that might be drawn especially from the Italian.

Prof. Primer then read a paper by President Henry E. Shepherd, of Charleston College, entitled